

Wanstead Urban District Council.

ANNUAL REPORT
OF
MEDICAL OFFICER

TO WHICH IS APPENDED A REPORT OF THE

SANITARY INSPECTOR.

1917.



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To the Chairman and Members of

The Wanstead Urban District Council.

GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to submit to you the following Report for the year 1917 and I include with it the Report of the Sanitary and Food Inspector.

The Local Government Board again advise that Annual Reports be restricted to a brief record of the facts and figures of the year's work. I have therefore kept this Report within the narrowest possible limits.

POPULATION.

I have been supplied by the Registrar-General with the official estimate of the civil population—14,424 for Death Rate and 16,079 for Birth Rate—and on these figures my calculations are based. Included in this estimate are the numbers of inmates of the Orphanages and of the Aldersbrook and Cottage Homes amounting to 1,085.

DEATH RATE.

The rate cannot be efficiently compared with the rates of previous years seeing that large numbers of the male members of the community are absent. The total number of deaths registered during the year was 118. This number includes 30 residents who died elsewhere, but excludes 10 non-residents who died in the district. The death rate was 8·1 per 1,000, while for the whole of England and Wales it was 14·4 per 1,000. Four persons died over 90 years of age: 15 over 80; and 20 over 70.

BIRTH RATE

The number of births registered was 186, as compared with 242 in 1916. There was one illegitimate birth. The birth rate was 11·3 per 1,000, a regrettable fall which is in conformity with the decline throughout the country generally. The rate for the whole of England and Wales was 17·7.

NOTIFICATION OF BIRTHS ACT, 1907 & 1915.

During the past year the total number of notifications received was 173. Of this number 126 were from medical practitioners, 3 from midwives, and 44 from parents. In 57 cases the notification certificate was only received after a circular letter drawing attention to the Act had been addressed to the parents.

INFANTILE MORTALITY.

In 1917 nine children each under one year died: of these, three were born prematurely. The number of deaths under one year in 1916 was eight. The rate per 1,000 births was therefore 48·3 as compared with 33·0 in the previous year. The figure for England and Wales was 97. The infantile mortality rate remains relatively low and this is of special interest in view of the work which you inaugurated last year under the Infant Welfare Scheme.

INFANT WELFARE.

The Health Visitor, Mrs. WILD, continued her very useful work among the mothers and infants. That her work is of the very utmost importance I am assured, and there are instances where, but for her timely help, disaster would have occurred. She has paid 600 visits to maternity cases and 80 to cases of measles. Her assistance in supervising the nursing of children suffering from measles has been of great value. She also attends the Woodford Infant Welfare Centre every week and takes a special interest in those mothers and infants of Wanstead who attend there. As instructed she places great stress on the importance of breast-feeding, and all mothers are encouraged to adhere to Nature's method, and the great majority of them wisely accept this counsel. A proprietary preparation is advised or supplied to mothers where the breast milk is scanty and this is usually found to be helpful.

In July last public attention was drawn to the work of the National Baby Week Council. Literature was distributed and special sermons were preached on the subject. It is stated that 100,000 babies die every year, and that at least half of these could be saved. Such a pronouncement is more than sufficient to justify every effort to awaken the public conscience.

It is a wise and useful policy for every expectant mother to consult her doctor from time to time during her pregnancy. She is thus in a position to be guided in reference both to the care of her own health and the welfare of her expected child.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

A reference to the Table of Notifications of Infectious Diseases shows that 237 cases of Measles and German Measles were certified during the year. The district therefore shared in an epidemic which was widespread in all parts of the country. In the earlier part of this time I visited many doubtful cases for the purpose of diagnosis where no medical practitioner had been consulted. Fortunately such cases are becoming fewer in number as parents become alive to the dangers which an attack of Measles may involve, and are anxious to obtain medical advice. Circulars bearing upon the duty of parents relative to the occurrence of Measles have again been distributed with beneficial results. The deaths from Measles in England and Wales average over 11,000 per annum, and this figure illustrates the risk which the disease entails. I am glad to record that in this district in spite of the large number of cases which occurred during the year no death due directly or indirectly to Measles took place. Neither were there any deaths from Diphtheria, Scarlet Fever, Small Pox, Whooping Cough or Erysipelas.

Diphtheria Anti-Toxin is always kept for medical practitioners, and swabs are submitted to the County Laboratory for bacteriological diagnosis by arrangement with me. No doubtful case should be sent to the Isolation Hospital before a positive swab has been taken.

ISOLATION HOSPITAL.

The Wanstead Isolation Hospital provides accommodation for patients suffering from Diphtheria and Scarlet Fever, and with very few exceptions these are the only diseases admitted. I shall, however, be glad to hear from medical men who have charge of any severe case of broncho-pneumonia complicating measles in a young child where the home conditions handicap the chance of recovery. I shall endeavour to admit such a case to hospital if circumstances at the time permit. During the year the number of patients treated in the hospital was 15, namely, Scarlet Fever (including one from an outside district) nine, Diphtheria five, and Erysipelas one.

Average duration of time spent by patients in Hospital:—

Scarlet Fever	...	...	...	45 days
Diphtheria	...	...	...	26 „

TUBERCULOSIS.

The following cases were notified :—

Public Health (Tuberculosis) Regulations, 1912.							Pulmonary Tuberculosis	Other forms of Tuberculosis	Total number of notifications
Notifications—									
Wanstead	..	..	..	..	..	..	19	3	22
Institutions	..	..	..	..	..	..	3	4	7

In not a few cases it is found that one and the same patient is notified on more than one occasion. In doubtful cases of Pulmonary Tuberculosis sputum is submitted to the County Laboratory for bacteriological examination.

In view of the danger of Summer Diarrhoea my Council, in 1916, decided to expend a small sum on printing circulars setting forth the Prevention and Treatment of this malady; also one having reference to the Danger from Flies. Both circulars have again been distributed, and beneficial results have followed. Again as in last year, only one infant died of Diarrhoea.

VENEREAL DISEASES.

A County scheme for the free diagnosis and treatment of Venereal Diseases has been evolved since the issue of the Report of the Royal Commission on these diseases. Any resident who desires to take advantage of the scheme should apply to me, either directly or indirectly, when he will be instructed what steps to take, and he may be assured that secrecy will be observed. Although he will be required to attend one of a group of hospitals it will be at a convenient hour and in favourable circumstances.

If a patient prefers to be treated by his own medical practitioner, facilities are offered to the medical practitioner for obtaining special drugs, etc., but the patient must pay the usual fees.

The scheme aims at bringing modern treatment within the reach of all sufferers. It is of the utmost importance that these diseases be treated at the earliest stages, and on no account should a patient place himself in

the hands of the vendors of any quack remedy, or of any person other than a qualified medical practitioner.

So far no application has been made for any such case in the District.

FOOD.

Throughout the year the Food Question has been a most difficult one. The old part of the district is fed from shops therein, but the new estates in South Wanstead are a long distance from shops and have been accustomed to have their supplies brought to them from three neighbouring districts. The shortage of supplies and the simultaneous withdrawal of the tradesmen's usual deliveries in the days before rationing was established created much trouble. In order to mitigate the suffering the Food Inspector interviewed all the shopkeepers in the district and a number of them in the neighbouring districts and successfully induced many of them to cater specially for nursing mothers and young children and also for sick, feeble and aged persons. Much good work was done in this manner by Mr. CHETHAM, who acted as Food Inspector. He, in more than one instance has, by his own exertion, succeeded in securing supplies of food for persons laid aside by illness and having no relative free to attend the shops during the hours that these were open. In this and other ways he has proved himself not only an efficient official but a real friend to many in difficulties. His work has been exceptionally heavy and his practical method of dealing with the difficulties of the food situation has called forth much gratitude. The Council will be glad to learn that the foresight which led to the purchase of a quantity of preserved milk and of sugar has been fully justified by the event; both the one and the other have been specially useful to nursing mothers and young children at a time when local supplies failed. Similarly the provision of a supply of cow's milk to needy infants in the district has been of much assistance.

There is no reason to believe that the shortage of food has had any appreciable effect on the death-rate, but, if continued, short supplies cannot but be prejudicial to persons suffering from Tuberculosis, and these should take advantage of the enlarged rations allowed by the Ministry of Food under medical certificate.

HOUSING, TOWN PLANNING, Etc., ACT, 1909.

Under the Housing (Inspection of District) Regulations, 1910, the following statement is required:—

Total number of dwelling-houses inspected during 1917						
(under Section 17)	...	...	...	...	...	8

Number of houses found to be in a state dangerous or injurious to health (Section 17)	8
Number of Closing Orders served by the Council (under Section 17)	Nil
Number of dwelling-houses rendered fit for habitation (Section 17), including those inspected during 1914/5/6	77
Number of dwelling-houses closed voluntarily	Nil
Number of dwelling-houses in consideration or undergoing repair at the close of 1917	Nil

DITCH AT REAR OF BELGRAVE ROAD.

Before the Lake House Estate, of which Belgrave Road is a part, was built upon, there existed a ditch between this estate and the Forest Land adjoining. The ditch drained both areas and had an outflow at the western end of Wanstead Flats. The only practical use of this ditch at the present time is to take the surface water of the considerable number of acres of Forest Land immediately behind the gardens of Belgrave Road. Unfortunately some of the owners of these gardens have extended their fences beyond the ditch and have filled it in without any definite plan of continuous and proper piping to maintain a waterway. One or more who took this action applied for leave to the Forest Commissioners who seemed to them the proper Authority to approach. I have seen a reply to one such application and in it no objection was made to the covering of the ditch, but no authority to grant such leave was assumed. Above the places where the flow of water in the ditch has been blocked there is now an accumulation of stagnant water. It appears that the only practicable solution is to reopen the ditch along its whole length, but many difficult and complicated points as to the ownership of the ditch have arisen during the Council's investigation of the matter, which is still having their careful consideration.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

PATRICK F. MACGREGOR.

PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT,
COUNCIL OFFICES,
WANSTEAD.

April, 1918.

TABLES.

1. VITAL STATISTICS.
 2. REGISTERED DEATHS.
 3. INFECTIOUS DISEASES.
 4. INFANTILE MORTALITY.
 5. INSPECTION OF FACTORIES,
WORKSHOPS, ETC., ETC.
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TABLE I.

DISTRICT OF WANSTEAD.

VITAL STATISTICS OF WHOLE DISTRICT DURING PREVIOUS YEARS.

Year.	Population estimated to Middle of Year.	BIRTHS.			TOTAL DEATHS REGISTERED IN THE DISTRICT.		TRANSFERABLE DEATHS		NET DEATHS BELONGING TO THE DISTRICT.			
									Under 1 Year of Age.		At all Ages.	
		Un-corrected Number	NET		Number	Rate	of Non-residents registered in the District	of Residents not registered in the District	Number	Rate per 1,000 Net Births	Number	Rate
			Number	Rate								
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1912	15,707	255	259	17.7	85	5.4	5	26	12	46.3	106	6.7
1913	15,469	238	243	16.9	119	7.6	4	24	15	61.7	139	8.9
*1914	16,671	216	218	14.1	107	6.4	4	38	10	45.8	141	8.4
*1915	15,635	250	251	16.0	122	7.8	6	22	13	51.8	138	8.8
*1916 {	†15,246 ‡16,588	242	242	14.5	119	7.8	10	35	8	33.0	144	9.4
*1917 {	†14,424 ‡16,079	186	186	11.3	98	6.7	10	30	9	48.3	118	8.1

Area of District in acres (land and inland water).

.. .. . 1,679

Total population at all ages 13,831
 Number of inhabited houses 2,856
 Average number of persons per house 4.52
 } At Census of 1911.

*War years. †For Death Rate. ‡For Birth Rate.

TABLE II.

DISTRICT OF WANSTEAD.

CAUSES OF DEATH (Civilians only) during the year 1917.

ALL CAUSES.						Males 58	Females 60
Enteric Fever	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Small-pox	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Measles	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Scarlet Fever	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Whooping Cough	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Diphtheria and Croup	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Influenza	..	..	..	..	..	..	4
Erysipelas	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Pulmonary Tuberculosis	..	..	..	..	..	4	5
Tuberculous Meningitis	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Other Tuberculous Diseases	..	..	..	..	..	2	1
Cancer, Malignant Disease	..	..	..	..	..	9	9
Rheumatic Fever	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Meningitis	..	..	..	..	..	2	1
Organic Heart Disease	..	..	..	..	..	6	5
Bronchitis	..	..	..	..	..	5	
Pneumonia (all forms)	..	..	..	..	..		2
Other Respiratory Diseases	..	..	..	..	..	1	1
Diarrhœa, &c. (under 2 years)	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Appendicitis and Typhlitis	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Cirrhosis of Liver	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
Alcoholism	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Nephritis and Bright's Disease	..	..	..	..	..	4	1
Puerperal Fever	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Parturition, apart from Puerperal Fever	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Congenital Debility, &c.	..	..	..	..	..	2	1
Violence, apart from Suicide	..	..	..	..	..	2	3
Suicide	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Other defined diseases	..	..	..	..	..	17	22
Causes ill-defined or unknown	..	..	..	..	..	..	..

Special Cases (included above) : Cerebro-Spinal Fever 2 Males, 1 Female.

TABLE III,

DISTRICT OF WANSTEAD.

CASES OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES notified during the year 1917.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES.	CASES NOTIFIED IN WHOLE DISTRICT.								TOTAL CASES NOTIFIED IN INSTITUTIONS IN THE DISTRICT.	TOTAL CASES REMOVED TO HOSPITAL.
	At all Ages.	At Ages—Years.								
		Under 1	1 to 5	5 to 15	15 to 25	25 to 45	45 to 65	65 and upwards		
Diphtheria (including Membranous croup)	7	..	2	5	..	..	..	1	5	
Erysipelas	2	..	..	..	1	..	1	1	1	
Searlet Fever	11	..	3	6	2	..	..	1	8	
Enteric Fever	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	
Cerebro-Spinal Meningitis	2	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	
Poliomyelitis	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
Varicella	50	1	19	29	1	..	..	24	..	
Puerperal Fever	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
Measles	179	1	152	9	14	2	1	11	..	
German Measles	58	2	10	20	20	5	1	3	..	
TOTALS	311	5	187	69	38	9	3	42	14	

Isolation Hospital—Empress Avenue, Manor Park.

TABLE V.

DISTRICT OF WANSTEAD.

I.—INSPECTION OF FACTORIES, WORKSHOPS, AND WORKPLACES.

Including Inspections made by Sanitary Inspectors or Inspectors of Nuisances.

Premises (1)	Number of		
	Inspections. (2)	Written Notices, (3)	Prosecutions. (4)
Factories—Including Factory Laundries	9	1	..
Workshops—Including Workshop Laundries	65	11	..
Workplaces (other than Outworkers' premises, included in Part 3 of this Report)	7	—	..
Totals	81	12	..

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2.—DEFECTS FOUND.

Particulars (1)	Number of Defects.			Number of Prosecutions. (5)
	Found (2)	Remedied (3)	Referred to H.M. Inspector. (4)	
Want of Cleanliness	4	4	..	..
Other Nuisances	4	4	..	..
Sanitary accommodation unsuitable or defective	3	3	..	..
Totals	11	11	..	..

Table V—continued.

DISTRICT OF WANSTEAD.

3.—HOME WORK.

OUTWORKERS' LISTS, SECTION 107.												
NATURE OF WORK	Lists received from Employers.							Notices served on Occupiers as to keeping or sending Lists. (8)	PROSECUTIONS		Unwholesome Premises Sec. 108 (11)	Infected Premises Sec. 109-10 (12)
	Twice in the year		Once in the year			Failing to keep or permit inspection of Lists (9)	Failing to send Lists (10)					
	Lists (2)	Outworkers		Lists (5)	Outworkers							
		Con-tractors (3)	Work-men (4)		Con-tractors (6)				Work-men (7)			
(1)	..	..	3	..	3	..	..	..	..			
Wearing Apparel— (1) Making, etc. . .	..	..	3	..	3	..	..	..	..			

4.—REGISTERED WORKSHOPS.

Workshops on the Register (s. 131) at the end of year (1)	Number (2)	Class. (1)	Number (2)
Total number of Workshops and Workplaces on Register, including two underground Bakehouses	46	Matters notified to H.M. Inspector of Factories :— Failure to affix Abstract of the Factory and Workshop Act (s. 133) Action taken in matters referred by H.M. Inspector as remediable under the Public Health Acts, but not under the Factory and Workshop Act (s. 5) } H.M. Inspector Reports (of action taken) sent to H.M. Inspector Other Underground Bakehouses (s. 101) :— In use at the end of the year	 2

5.—OTHER MATTERS.

REPORT OF THE SANITARY AND FOOD INSPECTOR.

To the Chairman and Members of

The Wanstead Urban District Council.

GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to submit the following Report for the year 1917 which refers to Food Inspection, House Inspection, and inspection of the district generally.

A large amount of my time has been taken by the working of the Orders imposed by the Ministry of Food. When it was suggested by the Local Government Board in their Circular of May 10th, that Sanitary Inspectors could make enquiry as to the operations of the Orders in the course of their usual occupation, this applied solely to a few Orders. After this date many Orders were made, and I found it impossible to give a cursory examination, but had perforce to give a larger amount of my time to this necessary work.

In order to make the operation of the Orders as effective as possible I interviewed all the shopkeepers and explained the Orders to them, making various suggestions as to their catering for the residents. No large amounts were to be sold to one customer to the exclusion of others, but a voluntary rationing *per capita* was aimed at, and to a large extent succeeded before the rationing of food became established.

The claims of those suffering from illness, nursing mothers and young children were attended to and to a great extent I can vouch for the success in this direction, but otherwise much suffering would have had to have been borne.

The shortage of Sugar, Butter, Margarine, Meat and other commodities undoubtedly affected the residents, but to December 31st no queues had formed in the district.

An examination of the ledgers of the various shopkeepers proved that the amounts sold to residents were in proportion to the number of the family.

The Sugar (Domestic Preserving) Order. A large amount of Sugar was allotted to the district. I visited 112 houses and inspected Jam made from fruit grown in their own gardens. Sugar amounting to 178½ lbs. was diverted to more deserving channels where fruit would otherwise have been wasted. It is, however, to be regretted that a large number of residents were too late in sending in their applications. The yield of fruit was exceptional; 75 per cent. of Sugar was allotted to Soft, and 100 per cent. for Stone Fruit.

I am indebted to the Local Food Control Committee for their valuable assistance in obtaining extra supplies of Meat and Margarine for the district generally.

FOOD INSPECTION.

The establishments wherein food is stored or exposed for sale have been inspected and they have been maintained in a satisfactory condition. The quality of the food has been good. Particular attention has been given to canned goods—herrings and tomatoes, sardines, lobsters, salmon, etc. The shopkeepers were advised to handle only the most reliable brands, and if a tin was found to be defective it was emptied and the contents rendered totally unfit for human consumption.

Milk.—The supply has been satisfactory throughout the year. Many roundsmen had joined the Army, and their places had been filled by girls and young lads totally unsuited to the work. Some difficulty has been experienced in observing cleanly methods. The dairies have been inspected while cleansing was in operation, and also the churns, ladles, &c., of milkmen from other districts have been inspected in course of delivery.

Meat.—Supplies have been intermittent, and the quality of that slaughtered in the district has been satisfactory. One carcase was surrendered.

Fish.—The supply of wet and dry fish has been satisfactory.

Bakehouses.—These have been inspected and cleansed twice during the year.

Dairies and Cowsheds.—These have been maintained in a satisfactory manner, and have been cleansed.

Slaughterhouses.—These have also been maintained in a cleanly state and cleansed twice during the year.

HOUSE INSPECTION.

Owing to scarcity of labour great difficulty has been experienced in the execution of necessary work, but only work of the utmost importance has been requested.

On a number of inspections, I have found it essential to again instruct many householders in the cleanliness of their homes. It is useless to have sanitary fittings installed only to find a few months later the premises are again insanitary, and these conditions are not confined to the poorer class. I refer particularly to the fetish of using only the first floor lavatory. In many instances old bicycles, lumber, garden tools, coals, &c., have been found in ground floor lavatories.

Infectious Disease.—The number of enquiries in connection with Infectious Disease amounted to 297. All Schools—Council and Private—in the district have been inspected at intervals and work undertaken in conjunction with the various staffs has been of value in preventing the spread of diseases. Enquiries at the homes of contacts from other districts have been made according to the nature of the disease.

Disinfection.—The work of disinfection throughout the year has been executed in a prompt and efficient manner.

Petroleum Acts.—The Petrol stores have been inspected and maintained in a satisfactory state. One License has lapsed.

NUMBER OF INSPECTIONS.

Number of Inspections	249
„ Dwelling houses inspected... ..	201
„ „ „ under Housing Acts	8
„ Complaints received and attended to ...	59
„ Nuisances observed by Sanitary Inspector	123

INSPECTION OF FOOD ESTABLISHMENTS.

Bakehouses	24
Butchers	204
Cowsheds	48
Dairies and Milkshops	200
Fishmongers	26
Fruiterers and Greengrocers	152
Slaughterhouses	125

INSPECTION OF SPECIAL PREMISES.

Factories, Workshops and Workplaces	...	...	81
Petroleum Stores	...	...	22
Mews, Stables and similar premises, including Allotments	...	...	198

NOTICES SERVED.

Informal Notices	...	...	97
Statutory Notices	...	...	Nil

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Enquiries made at homes in connection with Infectious Diseases	...	...	297
Rooms disinfected	...	...	34
Loads of Bedding, &c. disinfected	...	...	33

SANITARY IMPROVEMENTS EFFECTED DURING THE YEAR.

Drains altered or repaired	...	...	29
Obstruction to drains removed	...	...	14
Drains tested	...	...	29
Manholes provided	...	...	20
Soil or ventilating pipes provided, renewed or repaired			31
New 6 in. gullies provided	...	...	25
New w.c. pans	...	...	24
Flush cisterns provided, renewed or repaired	...	...	46
New glazed sinks and wastes provided	...	...	18
Sink, bath and lavatory wastes renewed or repaired	...		7

STRUCTURAL ALTERATIONS.

Scullery floors paved	...	...	19
W.C. floors paved...	...	...	20
House floors renewed or repaired	...	...	20
Walls repaired	...	...	50
Walls rendered	...	...	51
Light and Ventilation improved	...	...	21
Yards paved and drained or repaired	...	...	24
Roofs repaired	...	...	40
Rain-water pipes and guttering renewed or repaired	...		42
Windows renewed, repaired or made to open...	...		8
Ceilings repaired	...	...	19
Air grids fixed	...	...	50

WATER SUPPLY.

Draw-off taps provided on rising main...	...	...	19
Cisterns cleansed ...	...	...	5

DIRTY PREMISES.

Dirty premises cleansed throughout	...	...	3
Dirty Rooms cleansed	...	...	94
Foul w.c. Pans cleansed...	...	...	42

MISCELLANEOUS.

Nuisance from overcrowding abated	...	...	3
„ keeping of animals abated	...	...	4
Offensive accumulations removed	...	...	14
New portable iron dust bins provided	...	...	14
Sashes repaired	...	...	39
New fresh air inlets to manholes	...	...	4
Caravans inspected	...	...	

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

WILLIAM H. CHETHAM.

PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT,

COUNCIL OFFICES,

WANSTEAD.

April, 1918.

